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AUTHOR Schell, Robert E.
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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study was to isolate the differences between the level of assistance in career development perceived by and desired by students at the State University College at Oswego. Since there was some intuitive reason to believe that these variables were related to the sex and class of the student involved, these variables were included in order to isolate interactions. Study results suggest that delivery of services is uneven. Students expect the college to help them in developing and carrying out their career plans. They described the program they felt would best reduce the discrepancy between desired and received services. (Author/CKJ)

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Differences between Perceived and Desired Career Planning Services among Students at the State University College at Oswego

Robert E. Schell
Associate Dean of Students
State University College
Oswego, New York
May 17, 1977

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INTRODUCTION

More college students are acquiring degrees than there are jobs requiring either degrees or extensive training. In other words, the available pool of college trained workers has been increasing while the number of new job opportunities for them has remained static or has even declined (Barton, 1975). Gordon (1975) has pointed out that the favorable labor market for graduates over the past two decades was due primarily to rising gross national production and a large demand for workers in the fields of teaching and aerospace. Students prepared for professions within these fields, and college responded to their demands; however, economic conditions changed and both of the fields contracted, creating an inordinate competition among graduates for the few jobs that remained.

Groups who had typically not chosen to enter the labor market after graduation, were made aware of their potential and became active job seekers (Ferriot, 1975). Women and minority students began to compete in increasing numbers for positions that had been previously filled by white males.

Students, increasingly aware of the conditions which were likely to face them after graduation, look to the college to provide them with greater assistance in the development and implementation of their career plans.

As Barton (1975) has pointed out, colleges need to think seriously about developing methods of smoothing the transition between college and work. Generally, the efforts of college have tended to proceed simultaneously along three paths. Some colleges have attempted to develop specific courses in career development (Babcock and Kauffman, 1976; Lee and Anthony, 1974), others made efforts to change the nature of academic advisement, integrating educational advisement, integrating educational and career planning, (Dameron and Wolf,1974).

Still others sought to upgrade and intensify the roles planned by career counseling specialists (O'Donnell, 1975) and to implement computer assisted career development in the context of placement operations (Sander and Wolff, 1975).

Each of these methods appears to have had some effect on the vocational development of students; however, most of these programs were based on a conception of the needs of the institution rather than upon an analysis of the ways in which students wished to receive career information and guidance. The content of such programs was relatively clear but the context has not been fully explored. For this reason, this study was conducted.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of this study was to isolate the differences between the level of assistance in career development perceived by and desired by students at the State University College at Oswego. Since there was some intuitive reason to believe that these variables were related to the sex and class of the student involved, these variables were included in order to isolate interactions.

PROCEDURE

1. Subjects consisted of 24 students, 12 males and 12 females, evenly divided among freshmen, sophomore, junior, and senior classes. These subjects were a randomly selected sub-sample of a much larger sample of students who responded to a questionaire presented in conjunction with the Career Fair, sponsored by the Division of Student Affairs in April 1977.

2. Data

Each subject was asked to read eleven statements pertaining to the delivery of career information on the campus of the State University College at Oswego. Each subject was asked to respond twice to each item on a 5 point scale, ranging from strong disagreement that the statement is or should be true (1), to strong agreement that the statement is or should be true (5). Each student generated 22 responses, 11 of them indicating the level of services that they believed to be in existence and 11 of them related to the level of services that they believed should exist. These responses constituted the dependent variables in the study, class and sex constituted the independent variables.

3. Method of Analysis

The data were analyzed by means of a split-plot analysis of variance with four independent variables, sex and class, and two repeated sets of responses, items differentiated by condition (is or should be). This is a statistical method which displays the main effect of each of the independent variables on the dependent variables and the joint effects on interaction of the variables. Significant interactions were analyzed with a test of simple main effects.

RESULTS

Table 1 presents the results of the analysis of variance. Significant differences were found in the main effect of the items (B), the conditions (D), and

Insert Table 1 About Here

their interaction (BxD). The variables of sex and class and their associated interactions were not significant sources of the variation of responses.

The means for each of the items under the two conditions, is or should be, are presented in Table 2 along with the actual statement of the items. These

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Insert Table 2 About Here

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means were subjected to an analysis to determine the significance of the difference between the responses to the item under each of the conditions by means of a test of sample mean effects. The results of these tests are presented in the graphic representation in the figure.

Insert Figure About Here

DISCUSSION

These results suggest that the delivery of career information and counseling is uneven. The discrepancy between the perceived and desired benefits of Ed. 101/303, the FREE program, are not statistically significant ($p<0.005$) differences in each of the other items. Students, irrespective of sex or year in college, expect the college to help them in developing and carrying out their career plans. In three instances, students indicated that they wished that a statement was true, but they did not believe that it was:

a. students have the opportunity to meet with recent graduates or other persons who have found satisfying careers after graduation from college,

b. advisors often provide students with information about careers and help in the development of career plans, and

c. classroom presentations and discussions often center on career implications.

The means, at least in this sample, of the other items indicate that students agree that the statement is true, but believe that the statement should be more agreeable or the service should be offered at a higher level.

Each of the current program emphases could reduce the discrepancy between the level of assistance students receive and the level that they desire. Those which are most closely involved with the instructional process are likely to have the greatest affect on the discrepancies.

Ideally, a career development program would be based in the advisement process. Students would be involved in the selection of an academic program consistent with their long-range goals. Occasionally, the career implications of course content would be considered. Programs and plans would be tested against the experiences and advice of recent graduates with similar educational backgrounds. Direct career planning programs and services--placement, internships, and special programs--would be planned to support the curriculum-based career development effort. This program, while focused in the academic program, would not obscure the traditional instructional emphases.

Students described the program that they believed would reduce the discrepancy between the services they desire and receive. It combined the enhanced academic advisement system described by Dameron and Wolf (1974) with the opportunity to test plans and ideas with recent alumni.

TABLE 1

Analysis of Variance Table

Source	SS	df	MS	F
Between subjects	41.0910	23		
A (sex)	0.3713	1	0.3713	<1
C (class)	5.3788	3	1.7929	<1
AC	0.3106	3	0.1035	<1
Subjects within groups	35.0303	16	2.1894	
Within subjects	705.4545	504		
B (item)	104.6288	10	10.4629	11.339**
AB	4.4621	10	0.4462	<1
BC	26.2046	30	0.8735	<1
ABC	20.5226	30	0.6841	<1
B x subjects within groups	147.6364	160	0.9227	
D (condition)	201.2803	1	201.2803	93.718**
AD	5.1212	1	5.1212	2.385
CD	3.2803	3	1.0934	<1
ACD	9.9545	3	3.3182	1.545 (NS)
D x subjects within groups	34.3637	16	2.1477	
BD	37.5531	10	3.7553	7.806*
ABD	3.2954	10	0.3295	<1
BCD	12.2196	30	0.4073	<1
ABCD	17.9623	30	0.5987	1.245 (NS)
BD x subjects within groups	76.9696	160	0.4811	
Total	746.5455	527		

*p<0.05
**p<0.01

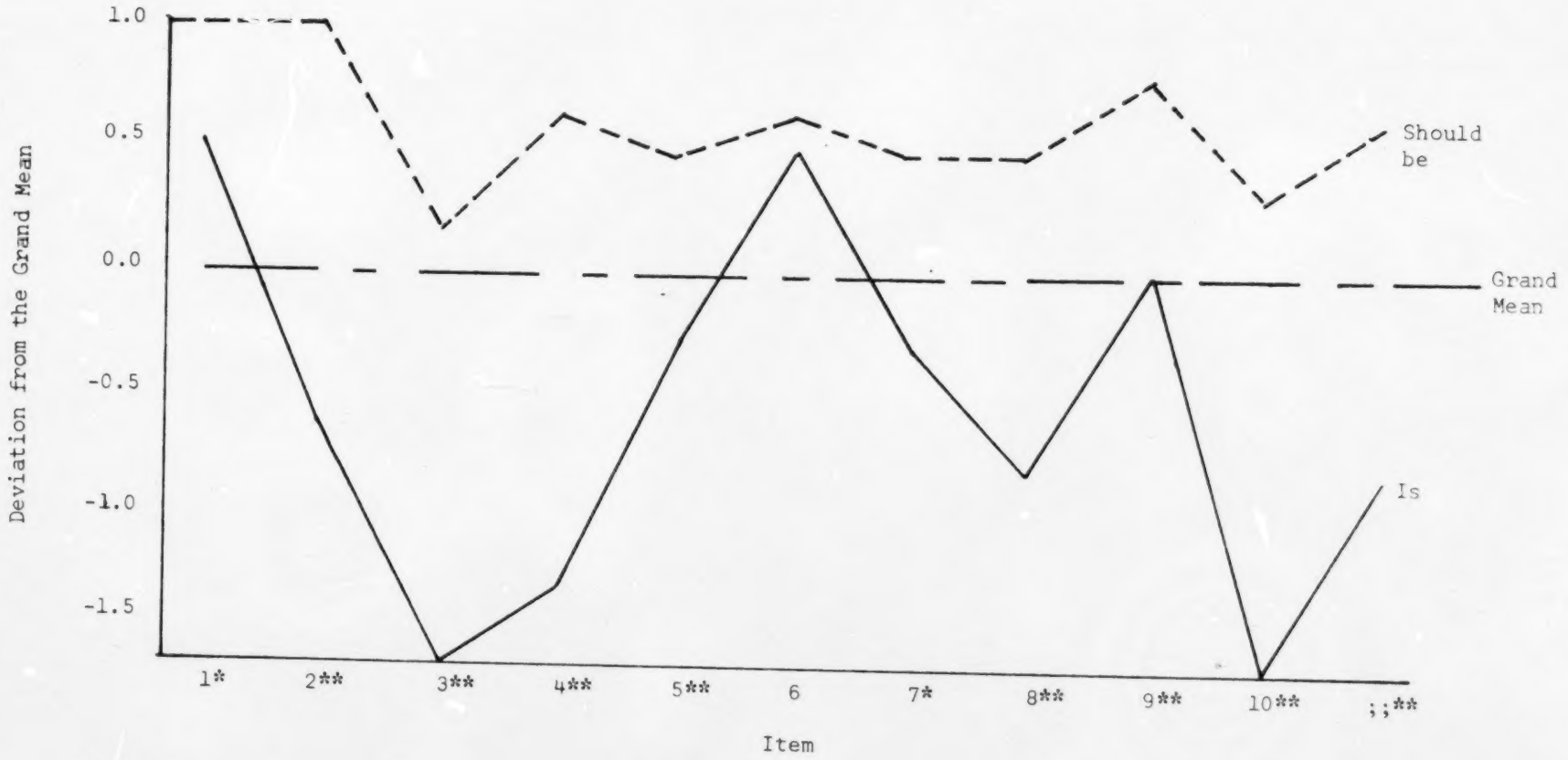
TABLE 2

Means for the Interaction of Conditions and Items

B X D Interaction Means Item (B)	Condition (D) Is	Condition (D) Should be	Total Item
1. Students generally seem to be concerned about finding a job after graduation.	4.33	4.83	4.58
2. There are sufficient opportunities on campus to obtain practical experiences that are related to future careers.	3.13	4.79	3.96
3. Classroom presentations and discussions often center on career implications.	2.17	3.92	3.04
4. Advisors often provide students with information about careers and help in the development of career plans.	2.54	4.42	3.48
5. Students choose their courses and their major fields of study with their future careers in mind.	3.42	4.33	3.87
6. Ed. 101/303 (FREE Program) provides important experiences in helping students in career planning.	4.17	4.54	4.35
7. The placement staff of the Student Development Center provides useful information and assistance in career planning.	3.42	4.29	3.85
8. Faculty members generally seem to be interested in the careers that students intend to pursue after graduation.	3.04	4.38	3.71
9. The special programs that the college offers such as: career fairs, field experiences, internships, and placement services are useful in the development of career plans.	3.79	4.67	4.23
10. Students have the opportunity to meet with recent graduates or other persons who have found satisfying careers after graduation from college.	2.21	4.21	3.21
11. The College is helpful in aiding the student in developing and carrying out their career plans.	3.00	4.42	3.71
Total Condition	3.20	4.44	3.82

FIGURE

Deviation of Each Item Mean From the Grand Mean Under Both Condition
(is and should be)



*p<0.05) Difference between "is" and
**p<0.01) "should be" for each item

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